



Museum ArtiFACTS

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Summer 2004

NJ Heritage: Essex Troop

When you look at the National Guard Armories around the state, what do you see? Most people see government buildings, but if you look closer you get a glimpse of an era where armories were not only buildings but the focal points of communities. They were designed, constructed, and financed by the soldiers and communities. The Newark Armory and the West Orange Armory share the same history. Both were constructed to support the units of the First New Jersey Cavalry, now known as the 2nd Battalion 102nd Armor of the New Jersey Army National Guard.

Used for mounted drills of the Essex Troop, the Newark Armory began in 1890 as Hill's Roseville Avenue Riding Academy. Dismounted drills were conducted at the old City Armory. The use of the two sites continued until 1894 when arrangements were made for a new armory to be constructed at the Riding Academy and adjacent properties. Costs were about \$50,000. The groundbreaking was held in March of 1896. Funds were raised through subscription from members, friends, and mortgages secured through local banks. Records show that the State of New Jersey did not contribute any money for construction. In April 1897 dedication ceremonies were held with many attending. The facility was a great improvement over the old riding academy and Orange Street Armory.

This armory served the troop until October 30, 1907, when it was razed to make room for a new facility. During construction temporary arrangements were made at the Orange Riding and Driving Club in

East Orange. The saddle room of the new armory was completed on October 18, 1908 and the following week the Troop drilled for the first time in the new ring. By the end of 1908 the grill room opened. It turned out to be one of the Troops greatest assets. After a dusty drill the men could refresh themselves in their own quarters, in the company of friends, and under the supervision of their officers. The formal opening of the armory was marked in December of 1910 with a grand ball. Half of the drill ring was floored and about 2,000 guests were present for the celebration.

Between 1913 and 1924, numerous changes occurred. The Newark Armory was initially built to house one troop, but when Troop C was organized in 1913 it was altered to accommodate more. During the reorganization in 1921, the third, fourth and fifth units were also housed. At this time a lease was entered into with the Quartermaster-General between the Essex Troop and the State of New Jersey for the use of the Essex Troop stable building at 112 Roseville Avenue. Changes to the Newark Armory included the enlargement of the grill room and the movement of the kitchen to the front of the building. Again, active and former members of the troop, their friends, and citizens throughout the state donated the funds required.

By 1935 the 102nd was designated a regiment. The Essex Troop Association deeded 30 acres of land to the State for the explicit purpose of constructing the West Orange Armory. In addition to the

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Essex Troop Armory, Newark, New Jersey, N.J.

Museum Happenings

Our volunteers and staff have been busy in the first half of 2004. On your next visit to the Sea Girt Museum you'll find that the "Air Corridor" exhibits have been completed; displaying New Jersey Air National Guard artifacts which include a tribute to the Berlin air lift, recent additions of historic photographs and uniforms, as well as a WW II era .50 caliber machine gun. Volunteers in Sea Girt have also completed laying red brick pavers behind the Essex Troop Archway, which bear inscribed tributes to service personnel (active, retired or deceased). The project is sponsored by the Retired Enlisted Association of the NJ National Guard. The cost for a paver with inscription is \$35.00. Forms can be obtained at the Sea Girt Museum.

The War Memorial Annex experienced some serious water leakage in a recent storm and the facility's exhibits were rapidly removed by our volunteers. The damage has been repaired and the team will be moving exhibits back, with plans for new displays on loan from the Essex Troop Heritage Room.

Work on the Lawrenceville Museum Annex's two new exhibit rooms is continuing and will be reported in detail in a future edition. A Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was recently held in Lawrenceville for volunteers from Sea Girt, Lawrenceville and the Trenton War Memorial Annex. Col. (Ret.) Donald Kale led the ceremonies honoring approximately 50 volunteers. Remarks were made by BG (Ret.) Santo J. Fruscione, AUS (First Vice President NGMMNJ), Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Robert S. Dutko, USAF (Vice President, Air, NGMMNJ), and Col. (Ret.) Michael B. Smith, AUS

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Letter From the President

It is a pleasure to announce that the Museum Foundation is off and running with progress for 2004. The Museum Foundation and DMAVA have signed a Letter of Agreement, which opens the door for a mutual working relationship to enhance and make the NG Militia Museum a centerpiece for NJ history. I would like to thank our Adjutant General BG Glenn K. Rieth for his leadership and COL (Ret) Michael Smith, Assistant Commissioner for his guidance and personal involvement for facilitating this reality.

Committees have been re-organized and the foremost is our Budget and Finance Committee, chaired by Mr. Robert Dennin. It is progressively working toward internal and external corporate fundraising. We are also working on general incentives geared toward enhancing our newsletter, providing articles of high interest. Development and maintenance of a new multi-functional NGMMNJ Directory database is ongoing and includes membership and volunteer

information, as well as contact links to individuals and other related organizations. We would like to complete the Lawrenceville project, which was started 4 years ago, through collaborative cooperation with DMAVA, our volunteer corps and the outside community. We will be seeking volunteers from various arenas for a Museum Awareness: Come and Visit campaign to increase the public's awareness of the Museums existence. Other planned incentives are to have the Board of Trustees, through our Long Range Planning Committee, re-evaluate our objectives and strategies. We are implementing a committee in late summer of 2004 for our 25 year Anniversary Celebration in 2005. Some of our ongoing initiatives include membership expansion and establishing a Museum "PX" Store.

I am proud of our membership and Board of Trustees for their exuberance and dedication to the Museum. In closing let me say this is your museum and it needs your support and involvement.

- COL Leonard Luzky

Recent NJ National Guard Troop Mobilizations

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs of NJ recently announced that as of May, approximately 2,400 NJ Army and Air National Guard members have been mobilized. These Guard members have been deployed for extended active duty in a variety of Homeland Defense and Homeland Security missions. These troops currently provide security at the state's two nuclear facilities, Fort Dix, Fort Monmouth, Picatinny Arsenal, McGuire Air Force Base, and the Air Guard Base located at the Atlantic City International Airport. Additional citizen-soldiers from the Garden State have or soon will be deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan (Operations Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom), and Guantanamo Bay (Operation Enduring Freedom), for extended active duty service in

support of the ongoing war against global terrorism.

Here at the Museum, our Curator, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Judith McCabe has been activated and is currently in training at Fort Dix. The President of the Museum's Board of Trustees, Colonel Leonard Luzky has also been activated and is serving at the Pentagon in Washington DC.

America and New Jersey are grateful for all of our troop's service, and we wish them a safe and speedy return to their families.

In our last issue, a call went out for care package items to be donated to Family Assistance Centers, which would be forwarded on to our deployed Troops. St. Catharine's School in Spring Lake saw the article and "Picked the Ball Up and Ran With It". Families

NATIONAL GUARD MILITIA MUSEUM OF NEW JERSEY, INC.

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War Memorial Annex

ArtiFACT ... (Continued from page 4)

find some sentinel that ain't had that racket worked on him yet."

The Governor went further, but the allegation that he had to crawl under the fence when the guard's back was turned is sustained by no evidence except the corroborative incident of grass stains on his august knees the next morning.

Edited by R. Dennin

REMINDER:

Annual Membership and Trustee Meeting

All members are invited to attend the Annual Membership and Trustee Meeting to be held at the Sea Girt National Guard Militia Museum at 10 AM on Sunday, October 24, 2004.

provided donations from the list of care package items to the Toms River Family Assistance Center. Thank you St. Catharine's for getting involved and letting the Troops know how much you care.

R. Dennin

ESSEX TROOP (Continued from page 1)

Roseville Avenue Armory in Newark and the West Orange Armory, a third armory was built in Westfield. The Newark Armory continued to serve the 102nd until the early 1960's as the Headquarters to the West Orange Armory. Since then, the Newark Armory has served the New Jersey Army National Guard and is currently home to units of the 2nd Bn 113th Inf.

The history of the West Orange Armory parallels that of the Newark Armory. It was constructed to house units of the 102nd Cavalry Regiment. As you enter the front doors you are taken back to a time when unit pride ruled. You notice the inlaid ceramic Essex Troop crest on the floor. The chandeliers are ornamented with horseshoes to commemorate the lineage of the 102nd. At the top of the staircase you are faced with pictures of the soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice during WWII. To the right of the sitting area is the grill room. Like the Newark Armory, it gives you a deep sense of tradition and heritage. In 1998, the grill room was renamed in honor of the last regimental commander, COL William J. Marshall Jr. As you pass through the room and enter the bar area you are presented with a visual history of the Essex Troop. The West Orange Armory is the current home to Company B of the 2nd Battalion 102nd, as well as maintenance units and a cavalry troop of the 42nd Infantry Division.

It is important to remember that these armories not only supported the military units that were stationed there but the surrounding communities as well. They were constructed by individuals whose patriotism and selfless service was unquestionable and their memory and heritage will never be forgotten. The next time you see one of these armories think about what they truly stand for.

- Captain Walter R. Gill

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Michelle Carrara, Editor

Lawrenceville's Civil War Museum: Heritage and History Preserved

The Civil War Museum, in the Lawrenceville Armory, is operated by Gen. James A. Garfield Camp No. 4, Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW). The SUVCW is comprised of men who can trace their family lineage to a male ancestor who served honorably in the Union Army during the Civil War. Each camp is also permitted to have a small percentage of members without a Union Veteran ancestor who have shown a deep interest in the Civil War. The SUVCW is a nationwide organization chartered by the US Congress as the lineal descendant of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), an organization which was comprised of Union Army Veterans of the Civil War. The SUVCW encourages new members. Applications are available at the Museum.

The focus of the Museum is to identify and catalogue artifacts and construct ways to display them. Members build cases, paint, and maintain the site as well as clean the weapons on a regular basis. Also, they assist with research concerning Civil War ancestors.

The artifacts in the Museum fall into three distinct categories: artifacts of the Civil War, those donated by members of the local GAR Posts, and those donated by the local SUVCW camps. The artifacts resided in the Perry Street Trenton Fire Headquarters until

they were moved to the Armory in July 1998.

Artifacts in the museum include muskets and artillery, uniforms, battlefield and prison camp relics, and medals. The museum houses a number of photographs, both GAR and SUVCW, as well as other memorabilia, including oil paintings and burial markers.

The Museum's documents include books on the Civil War and a Medal of Honor Certificate for SGT John Beech, 4th NJ Volunteer Infantry. Other documents range from GAR and SUVCW Camp Charters, burial information, encampment procedures, and minutes and membership records.

-Joseph Seliga

HAPPENINGS (Continued from page 1)

(Assistant Commissioner, DMVA). Each spoke thanking the volunteers for their dedicated service in helping further the goals of our Museum. In their absence, remarks of appreciation from Col. Leonard Luzky (President, NGMMNJ) and CW4 Judith McCabe (Curator) were forwarded. On behalf of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Board of Trustees, all volunteers received Certificates of Appreciation and a commemorative gift. The Museum is truly grateful to our volunteer corps.

R. Dennin

Become a TEAM PLAYER...

To more efficiently handle various Committee tasks, activities and functions, several committees were recently combined at February's Board of Trustees Meeting to form 6 permanent Committees. They are the **Budget and Finance Committee**. Chaired by Robert Dennin; the **By-Laws Committee**, Chaired by LTC. Mark Tarantino (Board Attorney); the **Buildings and Grounds Committee**, Chaired by CW4 Judith McCabe (Curator); the **Long Range Plan-**

ning Committee, Chaired by Gen. (Ret.) Robert Dutko; the **Membership Committee**, Chaired by Maj. (Ret.) Raymond Rauanheim; and the **Military History Committee** which is Chaired by Col. Leonard Luzky (Board President). If you are interested in joining any of our Teams please contact the Museum through our website or by phone at 732-974-5966, and your name/message will be forwarded to the appropriate Committee Chairperson.

R. Dennin

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Museum Artifacts

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An ArtiFACT... *The Trenton Times, August 21, 1885*

THE GOVERNOR'S DAY, Enjoying Himself at Sea Girt, How He Put In The Day Yesterday With The New Jersey Troops – The First Brigade Enjoying Themselves By The Sea

Four dilapidated grave-stones stand in an unkempt, fenceless little plot at one side of the road that leads from the Sea Girt Station to the beach. A man with a "you-get-every-cane-you-ring" stand occupies the vacant space across the road. A hundred yards down the avenue is the entrance to a level field, a third of a mile long and half as wide, in which Governor Abbett is this week having a grand picnic for the First Brigade of the New Jersey National Guard. It is proving less of a picnic than the soldiers anticipated when they, with alacrity, accepted the Governor's summons to meet him on the tented field. Many of them had an idea that a State encampment was a sort of Sunday-school festival, ten days

long with a daily walk around for exercise. It took them just one day in camp to learn that a soldier's lot is not a happy one when the sun is hot, there are straws in the soup, the drills last all day and the mosquitoes crawl in under the blankets...

One thing mitigated the situation. The Governor was with them. He said he was going to see how plain, every day soldiers lived, and he has been doing it all this week – from the comfortable distance of a nicely floored tent, furnished with rockers, lounges and easy chairs, with board-walks all around it and a board mess tent behind it. Still, the Governor is with them, and the men do not begrudge him his boards, ...The Governor himself thinks it is immense fun. His military humor was not satiated even when, the other night, he tried to come into camp after taps without the countersign, and found a musket

Just A Reminder... **DUES.**

If your membership has lapsed, there's no time like the present to renew. Annual dues are \$10 for individual, \$250 for Life membership, \$1500 for a Corporate membership and they are tax deductible. If you've received this newsletter, we have your vital statistics and no form is needed. So, renewal is simple. Please make your check payable to NGMMNJ, Inc. and mail to:

National Guard Militia Museum
Membership
P.O. Box 277
Sea Girt, NJ 08750-0277

lying across the aldermanic rotundity of his person.

"But I am the Governor," he protested.

"Oh you are, are you! Well, I let in a Governor and two Secretaries of State the first night I was here and came near getting Court Martialled for it. You'd better go

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